

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge
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<http://www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee>

News Release



For Immediate Release

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Supervisory Refuge Ranger

Okefenokee Wildfire Update Wildfire Preparedness Work Continues

Folkston, GA.....Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge fire personnel continue to battle dry conditions, having been without significant rainfall across the Okefenokee in the last twenty-three (23) days. Isolated thunderstorms on Tuesday afternoon did bring lightning strikes on the southern portion of the refuge, with no new fires detected through this morning's reconnaissance flight.

Fire crews are still patrolling and mopping up on the Compartment #1 Fire, located on the northern portion of the refuge near Cowhouse Island. The fire remains 100% contained, however crews have been extinguishing interior hot spots and managing reburning pine needle cast within the interior of the fire perimeter.

The Edge Fire, an approximately 7-acre fire located on the northwest corner of the Okefenokee, has not grown since detected due to pockets of water adjacent to the fire perimeter. This fire is only accessible to aviation resources, and a Type III helicopter conducted twelve bucket drops on one interior smoke on this fire yesterday.

The refuge has also brought in additional firefighting personnel and resources to aid in preparing fire lines and fire breaks across the refuge during these dry conditions. The Swamp Edge Break, an approximately 200-mile long fire break around the Okefenokee Swamp, has been harrowed from Suwannee Canal Road north to Boat Landing Road, and will be completed to Compartment #1 by the end of the day today. This preparation work will continue as long as needed.

The burn ban on campfires and charcoal grills in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge remains in effect until further notice. This burn ban includes the campground at Stephen C. Foster State Park and any picnicking areas at Okefenokee Swamp Park and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Main Entrance. Additionally, campfires and charcoal grills on overnight camping trips on the Wilderness Canoe Trail System are prohibited.

All entrances to the Okefenokee are open for business and welcoming visitors. Due to the forecast temperatures, we recommend getting out early to enjoy the best opportunities of seeing wildlife. Bring water and snacks, sunscreen, and wear a hat while visiting. For information on visiting the Stephen C. Foster State Park near Fargo, please call 912-637-5274; to visit the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge near Folkston, please call 912-496-7836; or to visit the Okefenokee Swamp Park near Waycross, please call 912-283-0583.

For additional information, please call Susan Heisey at 912-286-3110, email susan_heisey@fws.gov, or follow the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge Facebook page ([@OkefenokeeWildlifeRefuge](https://www.facebook.com/OkefenokeeWildlifeRefuge)).

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The Main Entrance (Suwannee Canal Recreation Area) to the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is the primary entrance managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and is located 11 miles southwest of Folkston, GA off Hwy 121/23. Entrance fees are \$5 per vehicle/\$1 per bicycle for a daily pass (good for 7 days). Annual passes are also available. The refuge is open daily and offers a variety of opportunities for the visiting public. Call 912-496-7836 or visit the refuge website at www.fws.gov/refuge/okefenokee for hours of operation, upcoming events, and entrance fee information.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook pages at www.facebook.com/okefenokeewildliferefuge or www.facebook.com/usfwssoutheast